

area. He is being heckled; and he says this:

“What you need to know, when I’m speaking as President of the United States and I come to this community, is that if, in fact, I could solve all these problems without passing laws in Congress, then I would do so.”

That is what he says to the heckler. He said: Sir, what you need to know is, if I could, I would. If I could change these laws without Congress, I would. But the Constitution doesn’t allow for it.

President Obama went on to say:

“We’re also a nation of laws. That’s part of our tradition. And so the easy way out is to try to yell and pretend like I can do something by violating our laws. And what I’m proposing is the harder path, which is to use our democratic processes to achieve the same goal that you want to achieve. But it won’t be as easy as just shouting. It requires us lobbying and getting it done.”

Wow, Mr. Speaker. He is being heckled for his position on immigration policy, and he says to the heckler: If I could do something about it, I would, but I can’t because America’s tradition is a tradition of laws. He says: It is not as easy as just one man deciding that he is going to ignore the law or change the law. What it takes is hard work, working with Congress, lobbying in Congress, working through legislation and changing the laws. It is not as easy as one man deciding he doesn’t like the law, because our tradition is a tradition of law.

He goes on to that heckler, Mr. Speaker, and he says to him: If you are serious about making that happen—that change happen, changing the law—if you are serious about making that happen, then I am willing to work with you, but it is going to require work.

He says: It is not simply a matter of us just saying we are going to violate the law. That is not our tradition. The great thing about this country, President Obama said, is we have this wonderful process of democracy. And sometimes it is messy, and sometimes it is hard, but ultimately, justice and truth win out. That has always been the case in this country, and that is going to continue to be the case today.

Mr. Speaker, that was a year ago. That was a year ago that President Obama said to the heckler wanting him to do unilateral immigration action, he said it is not just a matter of us saying we are going to violate the law. He said we have got this wonderful process, this crazy, crazy process called democracy, where we go to the House and we go to the Senate and we work to change the law. He says it is hard. He says it is a hard process. It is a messy process. But ultimately, truth and justice win out. And he is so right. He is so right.

Justice Breyer in that 9-0 decision, rebuking the President for violating the Constitution, said: “Friction be-

tween the branches is an inevitable consequence of our constitutional structure.”

□ 1930

We have been down this road before.

Mr. Speaker, I represent a community of immigrants, a vibrant, wonderful, wonderful community of immigrants, folks who have stood in line and paid their money, folks who have relatives overseas who have been waiting in line 5 years, or 10 years, or 20 years, and I welcome the opportunity to work with my colleagues to change the law to bring fairness and justice to them. Oh, Mr. Speaker, I have got folks in my district with big brains, big minds, strong work ethics, but the visas they are here under don’t allow them to go to work.

The President has proposed offering 4 million new work permits to folks who have done it the wrong way. I have got folks in my district who have done it the right way, waiting in line without the ability to work.

Are there things on which we can agree? There absolutely are. But isn’t the first of those things that the President cannot unilaterally change the law from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue? He knew that was true in 2012. He knew that was true in 2013. What has changed about our 250-year-old Constitution today that suddenly makes it okay? The silence in this town is deafening from folks who know the right way, who know the right way to pass a law, to change a law, to implement a law, and to enforce a law in the America that you and I love, the America that we inherited from patriots before us.

The President says it is sometimes messy and it is sometimes hard, but the great thing about this country is we have this wonderful process called democracy. Justice Breyer says, “Mr. President you might have forgotten a little bit about that democracy.” And 9-0 the Supreme Court says the Constitution was thrown by the wayside in the President’s zeal to implement his policies, in the President’s zeal to do, as HARRY REID described it, an end run around the Senate, and the President’s zeal to do, as Mr. REID described it, an end run around the Constitution.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome a policy debate with the President. I welcome a partnership with the President to fix a muddled immigration process that we have in this country today. We are a land of immigrants. We always have been, and we always will be. And I thrive on that. I celebrate that. But we are also a land of laws, a sentiment the President has acknowledged and celebrated in years past and a sentiment that just days after the last election the President threw out the window in the spirit of the ends justifying the means.

I don’t think the American people are going to let that stand, Mr. Speaker. And I call on folks from the left and the right to be a part of that chorus of

voices. We are not having a debate tonight. We are not having a debate tomorrow about policies of immigration reform. The discussion we are having is about process. The discussion we are having is about whether or not the Constitution matters. The discussion we are having is, who writes the laws? Does Congress craft the laws and the President signs them? Or does the President craft the laws and the President signs them?

“It is not simply a matter of our saying we are going to violate the law,” the President said. “The easy way is to yell and scream and pretend that I can do something by violating our laws, but the better path is the harder path,” the President says. “With respect to the notion that I can just suspend deportation through executive order, that is just not the case because there are laws on the books that Congress has passed,” the President says. “There are enough laws on the books by Congress that are very clear in terms of how we have to enforce our immigration system that for me to simply through executive order ignore those congressional mandates would not conform with my appropriate role as President,” President Obama says.

Nine to zero in defense of the Constitution the last time the President decided he was going to go it alone, an end run around the Senate, as HARRY REID says, an end run around the Congress, as HARRY REID says. But it took 2½ years for the Supreme Court to sort that out.

I think America deserves better, I think those trying to immigrate to this country deserve better, I think those fighting for work back home deserve better, and perhaps worst, Mr. Speaker, I think the President knows better and has chosen the path he has chosen anyway. There is still time to turn back on that decision, Mr. Speaker.

There is still time to engage in that partnership, to engage in that messy, that hard, but that oh so rewarding process as the President has described it that is the Constitution-defined democracy that we live in today.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NO INDICTMENT IN ERIC GARNER’S CHOKE HOLD CASE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRAT). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JOHNSON) for 30 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight, ladies and gentlemen, with a heavy heart because today we had a secret grand jury finding in New York that resulted in no charges against the police officer who killed an unarmed man named Eric Garner, a man whom they accused of trying to sell some cigarettes. That man was approached by law enforcement on the streets of New York, and when approached, he said that he had not done

anything wrong. He held his hands up in the hands up, don't shoot position, and they took him down while his hands were up and applied a choke hold, an illegal choke hold, and applied it until the man took his last breath.

What did Eric Garner say 13 times before he died? What did he say 13 times before he died? He said, "I can't breathe. I can't breathe. I can't breathe." And he said that over and over again until he could not breathe. He took his last breath just like Michael Brown, accused of stealing some cigarettes—or cigars, excuse me—Michael Brown, accused of stealing some cigars, Eric Garner, accused of selling some cigarettes. I don't know when possession and/or sale of tobacco merited a death penalty in this country, but both of them, both of those cases involved tobacco products. Both of them involved men—Black men—with their hands up in the "don't shoot" position. Both of them were killed. Both cases were handled in a secret grand jury process. We don't know the names of the grand jurors, we don't know what went on in that grand jury room, although we do have the transcript in the Michael Brown case, and it shows that a lot of injustice was done in that grand jury room which resulted in an unjust no bill against the police officer involved in that case.

We don't know what happened in the New York case, but we got a result, a no bill against that police officer who was caught on tape just like in the Rodney King case, all caught on tape, Eric Garner caught on tape, the killing, but still no justice done. Cameras are not the sole answer, it appears. It runs deeper than a camera.

These are dark days, ladies and gentlemen, that we are living in today. The first African American President is treated like no other President has ever been treated before. Is this a symptom of the Obama backlash that is occurring in this country? Is there any connection between what we see happening in the streets of Ferguson and on the streets of New York, with what is going on with the dehumanization of the leader of the free world?

First they said he was not a resident, not a citizen of this country. Then they said he was a Communist, a socialist. They accused him of being weak and indecisive as a President and not really having the intellectual capacity to be the President. Now they are saying he was a Muslim. Now they are saying that he is an emperor, a king, disregarding the Constitution. Where are we in America when it comes to Black males and how we treat them and how they end up faring in life?

Is it our fault? Yes, we do have responsibility. We can always do better. But don't put your foot on my neck and tell me that it is my fault that your foot is on my neck. People are tired of seeing what is happening over and over again. A young, 12-year-old Black male with a BB gun at a park on the streets and a police car rolls up, a

police officer gets out and immediately shoots the young man and kills him. Will that go to another secret grand jury process and have the same result as what we saw with Michael Brown and Eric Garner? It is happening throughout the streets of the Nation.

I tell you, I have been gratified by the protesters. I have seen protesters out there. It has been Black and White protesters out there demonstrating peacefully being met with a militarized response. And I say that to say this, that I am going to paraphrase something that you will probably be familiar with:

They first came for the gypsy, and I wasn't a gypsy, and I didn't say anything. Then they came for the Jews, and I was not a Jew, and so I didn't say anything. Then they came for the women, and I wasn't a woman, and I didn't say anything. Then they came for me, and there was nobody left to say anything.

Is that where we are headed in this country, ladies and gentlemen? Because there are all kinds of people out peacefully protesting, and that is what I advocate for, peaceful protests. Violence is not the way. Violence just produces more pain and agony. Violence is not the way. Nonviolence is the way that we must confront this because really, when you move past the fact that Black males are at the bottom of the totem pole, and we are the ones who bear the brunt, these who come to aid us are in the line of fire also.

□ 1945

What happens to one of us happens to all of us. If not you now, then what happens tomorrow when you come to my assistance? So we all are our brother's keeper.

Right now, we are operating under an economic philosophy in this country that only the strong survive. If you are weak, it is your fault, and I don't owe you anything. Don't ask me for nothing. You get yours. I got mine; you get yours. Don't worry about me. Don't ask me for nothing.

That is the economic attitude that we have that we are trying to preserve and protect in this hallowed body here. It is called laissez-faire capitalism, and it is supported by the U.S. Supreme Court that has contorted itself in such ways so as to rule in ways that enable a corporation to become a person.

When we have a corporation having a right to free speech and having unlimited funds and unlimited duration and we have a corporation that has a right to religious freedom, so that it can dictate to its employees their religious beliefs—it doesn't even make sense for a corporation to have a religious belief, but that is what our Supreme Court has found—and every other way that it can aid corporations to become richer.

The rich get richer, and the poor get poorer, and I don't owe you a thing—you are on your own. That is what they want us to believe, but it is time for people—for us to come together. It is all about economics.

They put Blacks against Whites, poor Whites and poor Blacks against each

other, and then they are going to the bank in the Brink's truck, and we are sitting, pointing fingers at ourselves, when we are all in the same boat together, the 99 percent—or the 47 percent, as one of our Presidential candidates most famously talked about in the last election. I am proudly one of those 47 percent, and I represent the 47 percent that is really the 99 percent.

So this extrajudicial killing of Black men has to end. If not, then what is going to happen to you tomorrow?

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

IMMIGRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to associate myself with the words of my colleague, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL). I think this body has been blessed by ROB WOODALL being here, and his words tonight just reinforce that.

The President has declared an amnesty. The law of the land is if someone is in this country illegally, they are not allowed to legally work. To change that law requires a bill. As Saturday Night Live pointed out in their version of Schoolhouse Rock, a bill has to pass the House, it has to pass the Senate, and then it goes to the President and gets his signature if it is going to change existing law.

For anyone to just pronounce "here is the new change" is an indiscriminate approach to changing the law without following the law.

I believe such an indiscriminate approach would be both unwise and unfair. It would suggest to those thinking about coming here illegally that there will be no repercussions for such a decision, and this could lead to a surge in more illegal immigration, and it would also ignore the millions of people around the world who are waiting to come here legally.

Ultimately, our Nation, like all nations, has the right and obligation to control its borders and set laws for residency and citizenship, and no matter how decent they are, no matter their reasons, the 11 million who broke these laws should be held accountable. That is what I believe.

All of the words—every one of the words I just spoke, beginning with "I believe such an indiscriminate approach would be both unwise and unfair"—were words directly out of the mouth of the United States of America's Barack Hussein Obama.

He was right. In everything he said in that quote, he was exactly right. There are millions of people lined up around the world who are wanting to come here legally. Most of those who would be coming would have to have some way to support themselves; yet the President spoke into law and signed his oral fiat saying: "You know what, I am going to disregard everything I have previously said that was exactly right,